

# Seared Ta'ape with Fermented Garlic Sauce

By Chef Kristene "Banchan" Moon



**Serves**  
4

**Prep Time**  
30 minutes

**Additional**  
1 week for  
fermented  
garlic sauce

48 hours for  
ta'ape brine

**Cook Time**  
5 minutes



Watch the video demo by Chef  
Banchan at [ChefHui.com](http://ChefHui.com)

## Ingredients

4 whole ta'ape  
All purpose flour (enough to coat)  
Kosher salt (to taste)  
1/2 cup canola oil  
4 lemon wedges

### For the fermented garlic sauce:

1 cup shoyu  
1 cup (about 40 cloves) garlic,  
minced  
1 cup green onion, sliced thin  
1 Tbsp sugar  
1/2 tsp sesame oil  
2 Tbsp sesame seeds  
1/4 cup Korean chili flakes

### For the brine:

1/3 cup kosher salt  
1 quart of water, boiling  
2 cups ice

## Directions

- ① **To make the fermented garlic sauce**, mix together all of the ingredients for the fermented garlic sauce and let sit at room temperature for 5 days to ferment.
- ② **To make the brine**, in a 1-quart container, combine salt with boiling water. Stir to dissolve. Add ice to the container until you fill it. (You need 1 quart total brine.)
- ③ **To prepare the ta'ape**, scale the fish on both sides and remove the fins using kitchen shears. Cut in from the back down to the belly. Do not penetrate the bottom of fish. Cut the head in half, making sure to not cut through the bottom lip of mouth, but do cut through the top lip. Open the fish up, cut out the spine with scissors, and remove the guts, gills, rib cage and pin bones. Rinse thoroughly, until there is no more visible blood.
- ④ Place the ta'ape in a large container, pour the iced brine over the top, and let sit 20 minutes. Remove, pat dry, and refrigerate with skin side up for at least 48 hours.
- ⑤ **To cook the ta'ape**, using a very sharp knife, score the fish making parallel 1/4" - deep cuts spaced 1/2" apart from end to end on both sides.
- ⑥ Season fish liberally with salt on both sides. Dredge the entire fish in flour, making sure not to miss any spots! This helps to ensure a nice crust on your fish.
- ⑦ In a large pan, heat the oil on high heat. When the pan is hot enough, just before smoking point, add your fully dredged fish to the pan and drop your heat to a medium. **BE CAREFUL PLEASE.**
- ⑧ Let cook for about 1 1/2 - 2 minutes on medium heat, then flip. Your fish should be golden brown. Let cook for about 1 1/2 - 2 minutes on the other side. Transfer fish out of the pan and onto paper towels on a plate to get rid of excess oils.
- ⑨ Serve with fermented garlic sauce and a wedge of lemon.

Ta'ape illustration by Micah Gomes.